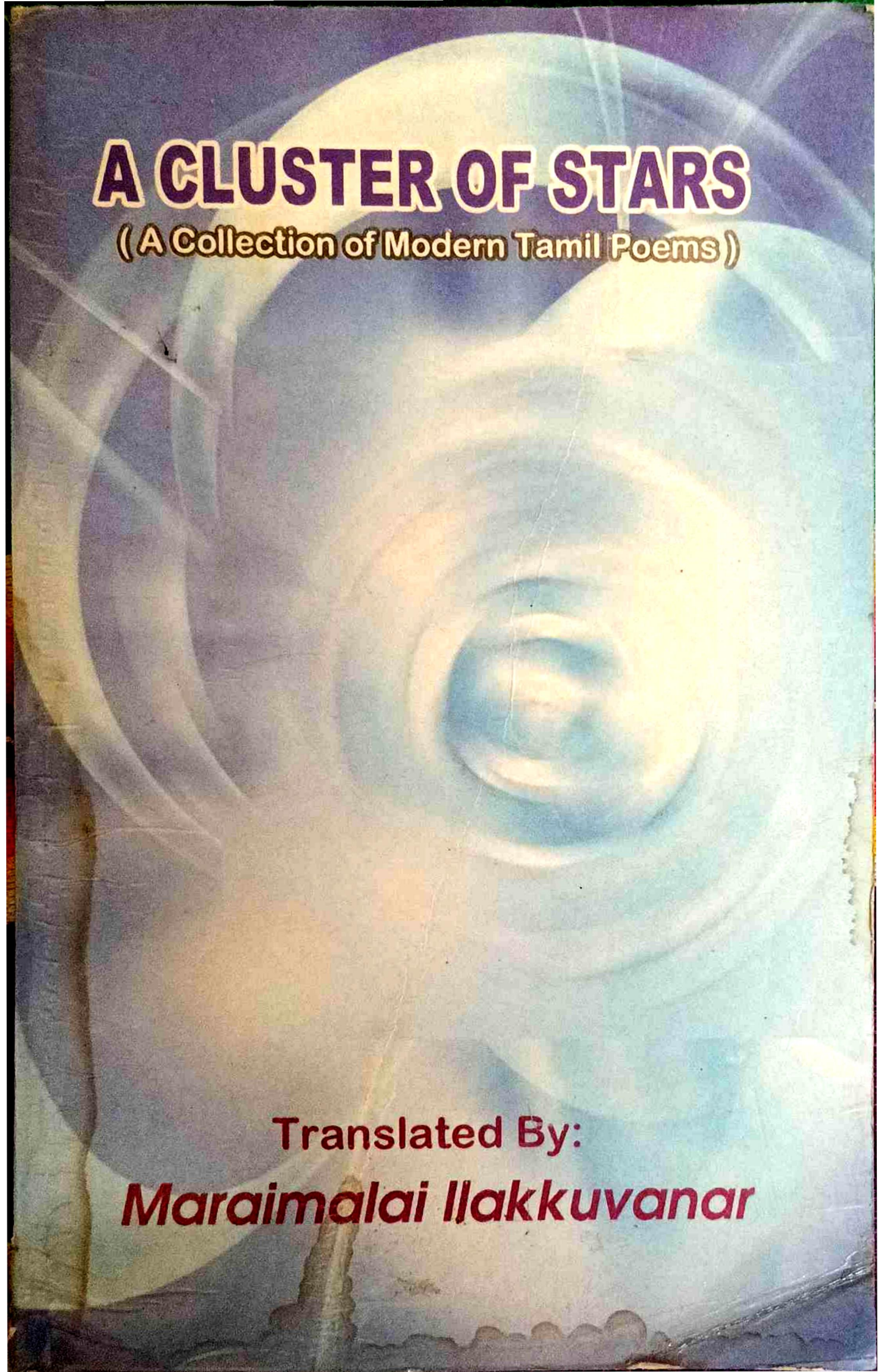
A CLUSTER OF STARS

(A Collection of Modern Tamil Poems)



Translated By:

Maraimalai Ilakkuvanar

A CLUSTER OF STARS

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Preface

Y.M.C.A.Pattimanram, a literary wing of Y.M.C.A., Chennai and accommodated by its Esplanade branch is one among the renowned NGOs that serve for the propagation of Tamil culture, language and literature. Founded by late scholar R.P.Sethu Pillai 65 years ego, from its inception till date it is doing a lot for the progress of Tamil.

Dr.Avvai Natarajan,a Tamil scholar of international repute is its President, .G.Bhakthavathcalam, a dynamic organizer, talented writer and eloquent orator is the General Secretary of Y.M.C.A.Pattimanram, for the past four decades.

A serial lecture program on Modern Tamil Poetry was organized by him and I was requested to give lectures on contemporary poets It was planned then to deliver lecture on a contemporary poet each month. From 1995 till date the serial is going on successfully. On 25-11-2008 the 100th lecture on 100th poet was delivered. Really it is an achievement and the credit goes to the undaunted support of Thiru G.Bhakthavathcalam, and the learned audience which mostly consists of leading poets in the city.

To propagate modern Tamil poetry worldwide, I am translating Tamil poems in English and putting in web as blogposts in portals. So far I have translated nearly a hundred poems and have posted in portals such as Sulekha ,ibibo and Associated Content.

On this occasion of my 100th lecture on Modern Tamil Poetry, I wished to publish a slender volume consisting of some selected translations as a token of my respect and admiration to our beloved poets.

I intend to publish the translations of all the hundred poets' works some time later as the work is not completed. Here I am able to give you a few poems of a very few poets. I wish to tender my apology for not giving you a complete picture. But I hope you will be able to understand my difficulties.

Translation is considered as a creative treason. Even then it is the only refuge for the propagation of our literature worldwide crossing the language barrier.

I thought it as my prime duty to convey the sense of the poem through my translation. Whether I have succeeded in my task or not will be surely known from the feedback you give after reading this work.

I earnestly welcome your suggestions and criticism and hope you will convey them after reading this book.

- Maraimalai Ilakkuvanar

Foreword

Dr. Layne Little

Regional Director of the Lost & Endangered Religions Project:
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While the vast wealth of Tamil poetic literature has become a vibrant resource in contemporary scholarship, the works of modern Tamil poets have been largely overlooked. This is perplexing when noting the diversity and vitality that has been sustained throughout much the history of Tamil literary production. This anthology clearly demonstrates that modern Tamil bards are painting poetical landscapes with an ever-widening pallet (of style, genre, and subject).

Amid the works that Dr. Maraimalai has selected for this collection it becomes quickly clear to the reader that contemporary Tamil poets have a lot to say. They are

articulate and informed. They are socially and politically engaged. But they also have a strong and subtle grace at expressing their unique ways of seeing, savoring and imagining their world. This is perhaps the most surprising and incongruous aspects of these works, as many of them simultaneously—and quite deftly—interrogate social and spiritual realities without sacrificing a very personal and intimate voice on the altar of abstraction.

Another aspect that has enriched the contours and versatility of modern Tamil poetics is the fact that these poets are well steeped in poetic genres and styles from around the world and across the ages. The Tamil poets of today can unfurl rich literary landscapes that echo the stark and haunting melancholy of Japanese *senryu* or the cool naked rhythms of the American Beat-poets with skillful ease. But they especially relish the poetical legacy of their ancestors: from the Sangam anthologies, where nature itself becomes a vessel of symbolic essence overflowing with human emotion, to Nammalvar's use of the transactions of human love to materialize the ineffability of spiritual savoring. And likewise true with the revolutionary poets of living memory, like Mahakavi Bharatiyar and Kannadasan, who live on at the margins—influencing the development of these works like the whispers of a (*kuratti)* soothsayer. All these echoes and resonances add their breath to the winds of pure imagining and fill the sails of the Tamil poets of today. But it is Dr, Maraimalai's profound devotion to Tamil that now brings these ships to distant shores.

Dr. Maraimalai has Tamil poetry flowing through his veins and beating out the rhythm of his heart. His selections reflect the depth and subtlety of a poetic sensibility that has developed from a lifetime devotion to Tamil.

Vazhka!

CONTENTS

I. Man, the Mighty

1) Coronation of Humanism - Abdul Rahman ... 11

II. Poets on Poetry

2) Poem - Pon.Selvaganapathy ... 13
3) Poetry is my Penance -Kalaimadhiyan ... 14
4) Poetry - Thamizhazhagan ... 16
5) Let us sing - Poovai Amuthan ... 17

III . Proclamation

6) Voice of the Poet - Pon.Selvaganapathy ... 18
7) A Hundred Cuckoos sing in my mind - K.C.S.Arunachalam ... 21
8) In search of Light-Thamizhazhagan ... 23
9) A Boat is arriving-Thamizhanban ... 24

IV. Nature

10) Rule of the Night - Vezhavandan ... 27
11) The Summer - Vezhavendan ... 28
12) River - Vezhavendan ... 28
13) Flowers - Pon.Selvaganapathy ... 29
14) Time is a wonderful Maid - Minnoor Seenivasan ... 30

V. On Humanism

15) Oh! My Mankind! - M.L.Thangappa ... 32
16) Humanism - Poovai Amuthan ... 34

VI. Tributes

17) On Indira Gandhi - Soundara Kailasam ... 35
18) Ode to Martin Luther King Jr; - Soundara Kailasam ... 37
19) A Tribute to Justice Kailasam - Soundara Kailasam ... 38
20) Victory of Obama will bring a change in the world - Va.Mu.Sethuraman ... 40

VII . Elegy

21) We bow down with all reverence - Soundara Kailasam ... 42
22) An Elegy to Rajendiran - Pon.Selvaganapathy ... 44
23) An Elegy to my Father - Mu.Ilangkannan ... 46

VII. Plights and Perils

24) Rituals of Peace - Pon.Selvaganapathy ... 49
25) When shall we attain freedom? - Kavimukil ... 50
26) In Search of a Face, Humane! - Poovai Amuthan ... 51
27) A Cuckoo unable to sing - K.C.S.Arunachalam ... 51
28) Agonies of Independence - Pon.Selvaganapathy ... 53

VIII. Self-Analysis

29) Human mind which wants to hide everything - Thamizhanban ... 55
30) The Unending quests - Kalaimadhiyan ... 56

IX. Haiku Poems

31) Haiku poems of Amuthabharati ... 58
32) Haiku poems of Thamizhanban ... 60
33) Haiku poems of Arivumathi ... 62

X. Limeraiku Poems

34) Thamizhanban ... 64

XI. Senryu Poems

35) Thamizhanban ... 65

XII. Modernist verses

36) Abdul Rahman ... 68

XIII. Inspiration for Perspiration

37) Beyond the yonder - Thamizhanban ... 70
38) Come on! Sing merrily! - Minnoor Seenivasan ... 72
39) Hi! Youth! - Thaaraa Bharati ... 74

XIV. Towards a New Era

40) Where is our east? - Thaaraa Bharati ... 77
41) Death-Bell to Caste - Kadavoor Manimaran ... 79
42) Let it be destroyed! - Kadavoor Manimaran ... 79
43) Let us create a New World! - Manivendhan ... 80
44) Let us make our country rise high! - Soundara Kailasam ... 81
45) Please Throw Away! - Ponnadiyan ... 82
46) No! No! - Ponnadiyan ... 84

Notes on the Poets ... 85

A Critical Review By Raj Arumugam ... 124

Coronation of Humanism

The Human bird of
The global nest
Now has got
The wings of Gabriel.

Oh! Planets!
Wait in queue
To give him a
warm welcome.

The multitude of
Gravitation
Opens to his staff
Paving the
Proper way.

The rocks which
Kept the secrets of the
Universe till now
Were shaken and
Torn into pieces
By his shouting of
'Open sesame'

Under the feet of
His horse
There is a lot of
Star dust."

The five great elements
Bow down and pay tax
To the great emperor" Man".
Whose coronation
Is solemnized at the
Throne of Universe.
Just from the seeds of
The forbidden fruit
Oh! What a fine
Heaven
He has created!

- Abdul Rahman

Poem

Poem...
The beautification of language
The soul of the poet
The springing fountain of skilful expression
An innovation
A beacon of communication
Embodiment of modest femininity
Which neither melts in any fire
Nor sinks in deluge
Minute in form
Magnificent in theme
Presents visual pictures
By its powerful imagery
Oh...that is
What we call....
A poem!

- Pon.Selvaganapathy

Poetry is my Penance

The eternity
Questions my inner mind
And mock at my inability
To find suitable answers;
Sometimes the Time aims at me
sharp weapons
Sometimes it offers me with
Honey;
The tiny seed of the Banyan tree
Grows as a huge Banyan tree;
The thoughts of the almighty
Always yield me poems.

The 'Gentlemen'
Who deviate from the righteous path
Targeting only to acquire money
Pretend to be honest
With innocent looking
And wicked minds
They cheat the society
As if they are seers;
I happen to be their neighbor
And involve my self in poetry
My reflections result in poems
The poetry never obliges me in time

If .I am after it
It leaves me laughing;
If in disgust I drive it
It dances like a peacock
Sings like a cuckoo
And abundantly favors me with
Amazing poems
And it is my penance.
Many desires
Unfulfilled wishes
Disturb my peace;
In the world, which is
Just like a noisy market,
Pollute the mind
With unwanted cravings;
Not caring this turmoil
The prayer which I am conducting
The penance which I am doing
Is poetry.

Amidst all sorts of evils
Ignoring the difficulties
Which paralyze my life
I walk like an elephant;
My soul is a fire and
The offering is my poetry.

- *Kalaimadhiyan*

Poetry

In my inner mind
The inner voices are
Scattered in a great disorder
My fingers dared to put them in an order

With the emotion and sentiment
Filled up in my heart
I melted my self
And gave a new illumination.

In the festivals of spring
The enchanting words
Ride upon the vehicle of imagination
And proceed for a procession.

The flame of word
Lights up my tongue as a wick
And performs a dance.

With laziness and sloth
My mind had been useless and dull.
It danced as a Kali,
The ferocious goddess.

- Thamizhazhagan

Let Us Sing

Let us sing to console the hearts of
The workers who toil and moil
Whether it is rain or shine
In fields, roads, forest and hilly areas
Who are exploited but never mind that
And sleep in roadside pavements
Let us glorify their sincere labor

- Poovai Amuthan

Voice of the poet

My poetic voyage
Continues here
With a simple motive.
I write poems on
Problems which affect us..
Not to preach
But to stress the need of
A revolution
In the minds of readers..
I do not wish
The lines of my poems
To be remembered by the people.
Instead of that
If any single line
In my poem
Helps the people to get
Elevated in their position
It is sufficient for me.
My poetic mission
Does not aim
To entertain people
I sincerely wish to
Educate them to agitate.
My poems do not

Want
To act as magnet
They will
Explode like
Sulfur
They wish to pat you
Not to make you sleep
But to wake you up
The rage and anger
Which were expressed
By the Nature

Through Earthquakes and tempests
Are now disclosing their dimension
Through my poems.
I am not a person
To camouflage myself
In grand old words.
I have come to
Agitate and shake up
The entire world
By New words.
Let us have a resolution.
Instead of speaking
To get applauded
Let us speak sincerely
And seriously.
Hereafter
If poems come as weapons
Let us recognize them.

If they come as
Mere paperwork
Let us reject them
With rapt attention.
We do not want
Any relation with
Love lyrics.
Let us create
Fiery poems
Which stir up our minds.
Because
We do not want
To camouflage ourselves
In grand old words.
We have come to
Agitate and shake up
The entire world
by New words.

- Pon.Selvaganapathy

A Hundred Cuckoos sing in my mind

Nobody can
Prevent my singing.
Even if a thousand persons
Come against me
Holding drastic weapons
In their hands
Nobody can
Prevent my singing.
Even if I were blindfolded
And abandoned in a forest
Even if sand is thrust
Mercilessly in my mouth
Even if I were handcuffed
With heavy iron chains
I will sing a sweet song
And dedicate it to the earth.

A thousand Cuckoos
Sing in my mind,
And the heart is filled up
With happiness unbound.

Singing birds-come on
Perch on my shoulders
The wicked Kali Yuga

which was happy to see us in tears
And which bathed in our blood
is coming to an end.
A new dawn in the sky
which is a quite new dawn
To give an auspicious light
Is about to rise.
The time has come to celebrate
The new happy occasion.
Singing birds come on
Sing along sing along
Sing with me-our
Songs are quite new
Tune and beat are
entirely new.

- K.C.S. Arunachalam

In Search of Light

Marching in search of light, I am
Moving forward through Darkness
Rushing to find a way, I am
Mingling with life and melt.
Marching in search of light, I am
Moving forward through Darkness

The droplets of Time
Act as a lyre
The space gets wasted
Weeping and to wipe out it
Trying to find out the root of the dawn,
Marching in search of light, I am
Moving forward through Darkness

Searched every nook and corner of my heart
Jumped over the garden of thoughts
I have entered to the dawn
Oh! I had exceeded in lying!
Marching in search of light, I am
Moving forward through Darkness

The journey is an endless one
Motivated by the life itself
Never hesitated by laziness
My mind acts as my wings to fly
Marching in search of light, I am
Moving forward through Darkness

Assuming it as the dawn of a new era
And as a solution for the perturbed mind
I have decided and determined
Here I have started with a strong will
Marching in search of light, I am
Moving forward through Darkness

—Thamizhazhagan

A Boat Is Arriving

A boat is arriving
Swimming across
the waves of
voiceless darkness

A boat is arriving
To make much excitement
To the penance
being carried out
by the mind of the mother earth

During the night
molded and shaped
out of the black
taken from
the women's eyes
in the acute darkness
which pervaded
Sky-high

Is the boat
carrying the suitable
answer-bridegrooms
to put marriage garlands
to the bride-questions
which have attained puberty?

Is the boat
coming in the destined night
carrying sunlight which will
melt out
the frozen song
lying in the
strings of
the soul-lyre?

Is there a detailed
Notes
Coming
For the intriguing
Stories of disgust
Hatched up in the eggs
Laid by the birds called
'Eyebrows.'

Does there arrive
The youthful sunlight of
A cool flower
Capable of
Alleviating the worries of
The dusky soul
Affected by the eclipse
In the margins of the lips?

Is a seed of whip
Coming
For the haphazard views
Which neglect
the rights of the flesh
Indulging in
extreme appreciation of
the shining skin?

Does the boat
Carry any medicine
To the quivering soul
Wounded by the
hands of the clock?

By the waves of saffron
the oppressed class is hurt.
Is there any
Panacea
Coming for the
Renaissance of them?

Has the boat, made of Bodhi tree,
Neglected instructions
And is it
Carrying weapons for a war?

- Thamizhanban

Rule of the Night

Ripe and sweet Mango fruits
Sparkle in the moonlight
Like glittering gold-cakes
Scintillate in the denser woods;
The Squirrels with tails bent upward
Which are always agile and alert
Search out for the choice fruits
And taking them taste in plenty;
Lo! The Coconut trees that turn their heads
Look like bewildering demons;
Oh! The Sparrows squat in the branches
Make them move like swinging benches
See the ugly and blinking Owls
Which come from the Banyan tree's holes
Sit in the branches and scream thro' the trees
watching vigilantly the forest in the night.

Vezhavendhan

The summer

The flowers in the Mango trees
Metamorphose into bunches of fruits;
The Cuckoo that gives sweet music
Sings a duet with its pair;
Oh! The lakes are dried-up now
The fishes agile jump and die!
This is the season of summer
When Sand only remains in river!

- Vezhavendhan

River

A poet on seeing me described
"Oh! It is a snake moving sinusoid"
Another poet uttered the words
"Gleaming silver rod, a smith can't make"
Yet another exclaimed with reverence;
"Oh Mother! You are nourishing the world"
Some may praise and some may scold
But I have to go a long way!

- Vezhavendhan

Flowers

How many flowers are
There in the beautiful garden?
How many variety of colours
The flowers have in their bodies?
In the flowers that laugh
I see the smile of Buddha
The garden with flowers
Teaches me many lessons
The maiden Rose with thorns
Willfully does a penance
For what?
Is it to see
The charming face of Nehru?
Cluster of flowers
who carry the sweet honey
Come on!
Decorate!
Superb and Splendid damsels' many!

- Pon.Selvaganapathy

Time is a wonderful maid

Time is a wonderful maid!
She is changing her name daily
As-"Yesterday" "Today" and "Tomorrow"!
She never stops her travel
Like wind and river, moving always,
Her journey is on, on and on!
Time is a wonderful maid!
A virgin maid for ever and ever;

Then and now I have seen her beauty
Here and there I have observed it;
Desire is my brush to hold it with grip
Here and there, in my heart
which is a screen, to preserve it
I am drawing with my might.
In her beautiful forehead
She keeps dark night as a dot;
The marble moon is
Her adorable face;
Perpetually she preserves her youth
Everlastingly young,
She never becomes old;
The morning star is a flower for her
She decorates her head with it
Before the dawn blossoms;
The bright color of the morning

Becomes the turmeric paste for her
After applying it for face
She plucks the evening sun
And puts it in her forehead
as a beautiful *Tilak.*
She covers her face
With fog as a veil;
After a while
She rises again
Like an awesome painting!
Oh! Eternal beauty!
The red sky in the dusk
She takes with much pleasure
To adorn her feet as a red paint!
The early night darkness
Is a cosmetic ointment
for her eyes;
Time-a wonderful maid
Never becomes old
Like a poem highly classic
She lives a life of eternity!
The rhythmic musical sound of rivers
Is a wonderful tribute for her;
The spring, full of flowers, is the
Enchanting smile of the maid, Time!
The Fame which never withers,
Remains as her friend for ever!

- Minnoor Seenivasan

Oh! My Mankind!

When provided with
A tasty fruit, will you
Involve in appreciation
of its external beauty,
instead of tasting it?
Oh! My Mankind!
Forgetting the soul within
You indulge in
Beautifying your body!
How many quarrels?
What a wide range of
whims and fancies?
The sensual pleasure
We derive from this life-
Is it not like dew
on the tip of Grass leaves?
Forgetting this we
waste our life
In selfish motives
Tarnishing the true
values of life.
Why do we live?
Just for eating?
Or to adore us with
ornaments and clothes?
We celebrate the wealth
which is as fluid as butter
Closing our eyes we rush
to jump on fire.

Fear for everything and anything;
Whether we can get money and gold;
Whether any harm may occur in any form;
Fear about our kith and kin;
Fear to death and disease;
Each and every minute we fear
We worry much, and lament over
for useless dirty things.

The sky-scraping balconies
Community halls and places
Dazzling stages which shine like gold
Theatres and opera houses
will disappear instantly.

If you make your mind as a glowing light
There will be no destruction and fight;
No pain and worry but pleasure and bliss;
Violence will vanish forever
Love will be the breathing air of mankind;
Let the Inner Light glow and guide.

- *M.L.Thangappa*

3

Humanism

"Oh Man! Your mind is a garden!
Let the flower of humanism bloom in it!
Your hands should rush up to
Redress others' grievances!
Your eyes should shine with Grace
To make your home a sacred one!
If you indulge in selfish things
The world will become a cruel one!
The street-dog which eats rubbish
does not forget Gratitude.
You are a paragon of animals
Boasting of your six senses
But you are the worst among creatures
As you neglect the welfare of others
If you find pleasure in others labor
It is worse than the act of begging!
Whenever possible do some good
Find pleasure in such virtues
Enmity and hatred will fly away
Heart will find bliss by this.
Charitable deeds will make you proud
They will propagate Humanism everywhere!

- Poovai Amuthan

On Indira Gandhi

Even if the whole world
Gets united to oppose you
You will never worry.
With a full confidence
That success is yours
You will achieve
Whatever you desire
Many happy returns of the day.

Prattlers may blabber
You will never bother
Ugly peoples' slander
Never make you stranded
Hungry peoples' welfare
Is your prime concern.
Helping the helpless
You always remain selfless.
A worshipful image passes
in the minds of our people.

Enmity never makes you stumble
You will laugh away the trouble.
Conspiracies and disturbances will
always be crushed by your strategies.
The love and admiration for you will
Surely make you leap forward.
Active and alert, you march ahead,

Arousing a big astonishment;
Some foolishly think
With frowning and blink!
Will rising sun
Bring darkness?
Such a meaningless crowd
You evade and march
To give them a
Suitable lesson
You strain your
Every nerve!
Attack and betrayal
Never stops your
Lofty march!
Whenever troubles come
Victory in your
Noble tasks get multiplied.
Oh! Lord Muruga!
I pray for the wellbeing
Of this unique leader!
Bless her with every success!

- Soundara Kailasam

Ode to Martin Luther King Jr.,

The wonderful country America,
The most powerful democracy
Witnessed a historical change;
Barriers in the name of race
Blockades in the name of color
Were shattered by the voters;
When I heard the news that
Barrack Obama is elected to power
Tremendous joy filled my eyes with tears;
I wish to narrate the sudden thought
That flashed in my memory instantly;
The great soul, Martin Luther King, Jr.,
Who had wishful dreams of the Black power
Dedicating himself to Gandhian way
Willfully underwent trials and tribulations
To achieve his target in a peaceful manner
Bank of Justice is never bankrupt;
Honorable voters of United States
Whom I admire with great respect
Proved today the democracy's might;
They never cared for color of the skin;
Content of the character they always prefer ;
The dream of Martin Luther King,Jr.
The disciple of Mahatma Gandhi,
Have come true in the sweet land of liberty!
His soul will rest in peace!
Thank God almighty!

- Soundara Kailasam

A Tribute to Justice Kailasam

While I was just a child playing games
You married and held me in your grip
A queenly honor as the lady of your house
Provided me with practical wisdom.
Taught me the current affairs and views
To enlighten and educate me.
Hailing Gita and Ramakrishna's teachings
You always stood for justice.
Divinity was your path and purview
Maturity of mind was your asset.
You lived your life unperturbed
Always enchanting'Om Narayana"
"Let the Whites tease us to any extent
Let our stomachs go unfilled
Let our legs loose their strength and
Let my frail body fall down
I will never swerve from Truth
I am ready to die for our rights"
Thus told Gandhi to motivate us
He suffered a lot for us
You made me know the grace of
Our Father of Nation!
'In my heart you placed
The light of Gandhian thought.

While the aliens commit atrocities
By evil designs and cruel laws
Why should we bow down our heads?
Let us stand erect to make our
Motherland free and fair
Patriotism filled up my heart
By the logical arguments you taught.
You brought and taught me as a Father
Fondled and nourished me as a mother
Added a lot of knowledge as a Teacher
Each and every minute you.
Guarded me like a God and all the
Care, affection and love you gave
Can never be put in a simple word' Husband.'
You are the perennial source of
My thought, word and action
My life, laugh and life of laugh
Everything belongs to you and
Everything begins with you.

- Soundra Kailasam

Victory of Obama will bring a change in the world!

Time changes, changes Time
Can anybody prevent the change of Time?
The Mighty Nature proves its strength
Nobody can prevent its force
Sometimes Time acts like a dreadful venom
Surprisingly it acts as divine ambrosia for us;
The almighty has now given ambrosia for us
'Impossible' has been made possible by Obama!

America is a land of immigrants
Among the hundreds of ethnic groups
African-Americans only suffered a lot
Slavery and misery were the gifts for them
Tolerance and starvation were their assets
Abraham Lincoln laid a foundation
Barrack Obama reached the peak!

American people are always the best,
Highly courteous and hospitable
Brisk and bright, they work and shine!
They never care for color or race
Humanism and affection, their ways!
They have elected Barrack Obama
They have created a world record!

Oh! Our mighty Obama!
Set right the society!
Great changes you have to make
Big challenges you have to face!
Equality, liberty and fraternity
Should remove all kinds of enmity!
Let there emerge a golden era!
No more recession! No more war!

U.S. is our Garden of Eden
Obama is a wonderful flower!
Meticulous and meaningful work
Meets success! It has been proved!
His knowledge is the source of power
Made it possible to reach the tower!
The spark from his bright eyes
Acted as a beacon to lead U.S.!

Borderlines are changing always
The world map is altered many a time!
Like fresh and fragrant flowers that bloom
Political changes make geographical changes!
Oppression and state terrorism drive the
Suffering community to struggle and fight!
Support the people who are suppressed!
No more calamities! Peace everywhere!

- Va.Mu. Sethuraman

We bow down with all reverence

Oh! Beloved sons of
Our mother Bharat!
Noble men who added
Glory to our land!
With wide open eyes
You were defending our border
In the melting snow chilling the bones
You were alert and vigilant
Attending duty without any rest
Ignoring your health
Unmindful of your precious lives
You rendered your service
With abundant dedication
You assailed and assaulted
The deceitful enemy
with full determination.
Without thinking of
The loving wife
And dearest children
You intensified the war;
Trouble never troubled you
You neither wavered
Nor quivered in the
Combat to drive away
The treacherous enemy

From our border
You hit them a deadly blow
Made them tremble with fear.
You were as dreadful
As the fire itself.
Alas! The foolish
Yama grabbed your lives.
You lost your lives
to defend our land.
You are the celebrities
of this noble land.
You are not alive today
But you will be ever living in our hearts.
Let us shower flowers
at your feet.
We bow down our heads
with all reverence.

- Soundara Kailasam

An Elegy to Rajendiran

(A student of Annamalai University,who was shot dead by th Police during the Anti-Hindi agitation in1965)

The scene of yesterday
I can visualize today
The pitiable days when
We wept and cried
When our friends shed blood
Recur in my mind always
The fire-mouthed devils
Pounced upon our boys
They jumped over
The school-going kids
Boys of the blooming youth
Were hacked to death mercilessly
How can I forget
Those cruel scenes?
When the police fired
The bullet hit on the shoulder
piercing the biceps
a spurt of blood came as a jet!
The unperturbed lad
Smiled with glad!
The heroism he displayed
can never be compared
to any other hero in the epics!

There is no equivalent!
We were jubilant!
Rajendran shouted the slogan
"Our body to the earth and
Our life to our Tamil!
With strong will
We have dedicated
We cannot be dictated!"
Oh...The bullet killed him!
Neither he waylaid anybody
Nor indulge in violence
He just fought for his right
In a country called democratic
Oh... They murdered him!
Rather they butchered Justice.

Everyday when the morning sky appears red
Every evening when the sky looks red
There I see the bloody reddish
Wound body of Rajendiran!
A horrible murder scene!
A sacrifice unparalleled!
Which daily I remember

- Pon.Selvaganapathy

An Elegy to my Father

(The poet has composed an elegy on his father)

How to express my feelings as a poem
While I have lost my dear father?
Oh! My father! A role model for every one!
How rapid you are in doing all my needs!
How prompt in giving me a high level education?
You did your duty in an excellent way
As an indebted son I have to find a way
for my emotions
While my mother took care during night
My father toiled in the day like a sun
To mould and shape me
As the best student.
Even during the vacation in varsity
You will never allow me to come to the home
As according to you
It will waste my time and studies
You made
Special arrangements to
Accommodate me
In the hostel itself
During vacation
All these efforts
Encouraging supports
Reminded me many things.
Our Thirukkural says:
'A woman rejoices
At the birth of a son
But even more

When he is praised'
Did you want to delight my mother?
Again I am reminded of another Kural which says:
'A wise son gives joy
Not only to his father
But to all the world'
Oh! My dear Father!
Did you want me to shine as the best intellect?
Yet another Kural says:
The service
A son can render his father
Is to make the men ask
'How came the blessing?'
Oh! My father!
How am I to get fame and
Enrich your name?
You have gone forever
I have lost my life
I have been deprived of my soul
You stood as a Banyan
Now rooted out
A great and cruel fall
If the rivulets get dried
We can have water from the mainstream
The main river
The great river
Stream of affection and grace
Have dried up
What to do?
If the strings get cut up in a veena
What will happen to the music?
If the captain of a ship collapses

What will happen to a great ship?
If there will not be the sun
From dawn to dusk
What will happen to the garden, plants and flowers?
How can we find an alternate/?
Your loss prompts me to think all these
Yes, I am trying to forget the sad demise
My head advises
My heart refuses
Mourning all the time
With pain.
If I stop my tears
My heart melts
My blood boils as a fuel
Having given us all the best
Where have you disappeared
In search of some other best thing?
Cherishing all the virtues
You acquired the
Height of fame.
As a tree with nice fruits,
You helped our
Kith and kin.
My heart melts
My eyes are swimming in tears
I pray for your soul
May your soul rest in peace
My mind is after bliss and grace
Let there be peace
May your soul rest in peace!

- Mu.Ilangkannan

Rituals of Peace

All countries
Are imprisoned by
Their borderlines
The whole mankind
Is bound by various divisions
Some people in the earth
Divide the majority
To gain leadership for them.
People divided
For the advantage of a few
Quarrel, fight and die as victims.
Under the surveillance of clouds
Bomb-shells thunder and rain.
Brokers of peace
Run hither and thither
With umbrellas having
so many holes.
The fingers tune
with much strain;
But from the fiddle
We can hear only the
Military band.

While countries
are imprisoned by
Their borderlines
The whole mankind
is bound by
divisions. divisions.
and divisions.

- Pon.Selvaganapathy

When shall we attain freedom?

The breeze which comes from Pothigai
Does enjoy freedom;
The sun which arises in the east
Enjoys freedom in all directions;
Is there any freedom for us
From the rotten caste feeling?

The waves which surf in the sea
Have enormous freedom to move;
When we will get freedom from
The sweat and hard work?
The Moon which roams in the sky
Is free from all forces
Is there any freedom for us
From the grips of our Masters?
The rivers which ruin the banks
Are ever-free in their movements;
Where to get freedom for
the wretched poor people?
Is there only freedom for those
Who exploit and enrich themselves?
When shall we attain for those
Who are in distressing povert.

- Kavimukil

In Search Of a Face, Humane!

Standing in front of the podium
A face will roar with valiance!
Showing artificial sympathy another face
Will act skillfully cheating others!
Another face will pretend as if it is
Always speaking noble principles!
Hiding stealthy love appears another face
Showering affection to weaker sex
With evil motives comes one more face!
Defeats another face all chameleons
By always changing colors
But I am unable to see a face humane!

- Poovai Amuthan

A Cuckoo, unable to sing

This cuckoo, nowadays,
has become unable to sing.
Neither song nor tune and beat
Interests it.
People blame that
It has become dumb.
I do not understand matters
Why should I sing?

For what purpose
I have to sing?'
I baffle.
If I point out in my songs
the social problems and miseries
Nobody cares.
Communal discriminations
Lead to clashes and murders;
Heads roll down and murders continue
In the name of various religious saints
Atomic terrorism is sponsored by
Governments pretend to be democratic
Genocide is their procedure
to destroy the whole mankind.
To get food and water
you are toiling very much
Without any worry
You wander in vain!
Our life has become a comic circus
You have closed your eyes
In a drowsy state.
For some or
Other reason
This cuckoo is
unable to sing.

- K.C.S.Arunachalam

Agonies of Independence

The pangs of Slavery has gone!
But the agonies of Independence
Make us suffer in
A vicious circle.
Here
there is a huge
mountain of Food grains.
On another side-
There are
Deep valleys of poverty!
We have got
only blind Arjunas.
As a result
the targets
get
misplaced.
The burden
Carried by the Heads
Console The shoulders
And they keep mum.
Party flags and slogans
become an additional burden

for the people
and hinder their
Progress.
Those principles
which came to adopt us
have been taken adoption by
Wrong persons.
See our state!
Anger is forgotten
Cowardice has become
Our national character.
Valor and self-respect
have gone.
Dejection
And depression
Are ruling our minds.

- Pon. Selvaganapathy

Human mind which wants to hide everything

The Universe
Which is always open
Never shuts its door
For probing quests.
The Wind
Never refuses
to unlock
It's deep mind
to the flowers.
The waves
Expose the ocean's secrets
even after it is blocked many times.
The earth
Advertises loudly
the whereabouts of
the seed
which goes underground.
Even though
The volcano
Never opens its mouth
We are able to know the turmoil
Of its boiling mind
Explicitly.
Man alone possesses
The mind which is
Hiding all things
And every thing
And still trying to
Bury everything deep.

- Thamizhanban

The unending quests

Short-lived dreams
Woven by
The Looms of thought
In myriad designs;
In that process
Arise
Innumerable questions
Which are in search of
Suitable answers
Endlessly;
The galaxy
Which occupies the sky
Aggressively
Accelerates
The intellectual pursuit;
Try to find out
His innovation in creation
The poet's
Explorations
Transcend time and place;
The quest
Continues
Papers
With various answers
Try to quench our intellectual thirst;
Poems in search of the omnipresent
Those who were
Deeply delving
In material pursuits,

When intend to
Search the Truth,
Get gleaming light of
Metaphysical insights;
The songs are
First tied by the threads of
Affection and attachment;
Afterwards they probe
The whereabouts of
reconciliation and peace.
The quests of persons
who pretend to have found delight
Are nothing
But the mirage found by thirsty deer.
What then is life
Which begins with birth and ends after death?
Nothing but the
Serial of puzzles
For which
We are still in
Search of the key;
I am in intense thirst
Unable to quench, yet.
I drown myself in the pond of truth.
In search of myself
In search of me
To find out whom I am.

- Kalaimadhiyan

Haiku Poems of Amuthabaharati

In that forest
Which bamboo
Is going to be a flute?

The poems have not been
Completely compiled..
Some remain in creepers..

For a time-pause
He played cards
Heavy loss..! Friendship!

Even though heavily attacked
By the chisel
The stone laughs...as Statue!

Class room
The child observes with rapt attention
A cloud through the window!

A guest visited
She sacrificed her life
Chicken!

A huge naked figure
Shameless-
Sky!

A long talk
Stopped-
Train!

Standing in the scorching sun
Protecting us by its shadows
Trees!

How foolish
The flowers are
Always laughing!

The chisel only knows
The statue which is hiding itself
Inside the rock.

Haiku Poems of Thamizhanban

Satire

The Dawn's feet bound in chain
The Moon is varnishing
The Jail's iron bars.

The writings invited for
A Royal dinner-
The writer's soul hanging in the pen-nib.

I just dug a fountain in my mind-
Thousand people rushed
To sit and drink.

Self-pity

I was lying as a corpse
Felt immense pleasure
Never intended to stand again.

Metaphysics

Death—
The torch of the soul
in the journey of life.

Personality-builder

To the person who fell down ten times
Mother Earth kissed and told:
Already you have stood erect nine times!

Again and again-
The moonlight fell on it-
The rock blossomed into a flower!

Realism

Darkness remained in the hands
which pushed out
the night.

Poetry —

Possesses thousand hands!
Its begging bowl has a lot of holes!

Irony

The sky is beautiful!
The Earth is also beautiful!
I have a loaf of bread in my hand.

The fishes in the glass tanks,
dreaming much about
rubbing shoulders with oceans.

Haiku Poems of Arivumathi

Picture for eyes
Music for ears
Oh! Rain!

Rivers flowing
In the window-pane!
Raining outside!

After a heavy rain
Watched its face in the water
Street-lamp!

Butterfly for sale
Heavy pain!
For the flower-plant!

Tight security in border
Courageously crossing
Butterfly!

No branches available
The dove perched on
The cross at cemetery

Soldier expired
His wife received
An incomplete letter.

Enjoy watching
The dreadful weapons
In the museum!

Jet-bombers passing
A screaming in the bunker
Labor-pains!

Old-Age Home
Somebody is singing
a lullaby!

Limeraiku Poems
Of
Thamizhanban

Monotonous life in forest
Deer and Rabbit wanted rest and haunted
In children's songs, they found a place, the best!

The wind lost its wings
Took rest In the bird's nest, swinging,
It stayed a while, puzzling?

A bird lost its life;
The heights it reached, while alive,
wept with unending tears.

Fly away with birds
But forget that you are a man.
You don't need wings like birds.

'Bernard never received any bribery'
To pronounce such a witness
John received a bribery.

Smoke leads to death
Drinking also kills us
Selling them gives us wealth.

Senryu Poems
Of
Thamizhanban

The defeat is assured
But only
the constituency needs be finalized

One hundred Mirrors
He who had looked through these
had just gone to buy a new face.

After three years he received
First premium of pension
to finance his funeral rites.

God asked a boon from
His devotees;
'Do not drag me into politics'

Satan started a party!
The first member...
God!

Who taught you?
Blow to the student
Pain to the teacher

The song came,
Fully afraid,
From the singer's throat.

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The first member...
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Who taught you?
Blow to the student
Pain to the teacher

The song came,
Fully afraid,
From the singer's throat.

The Leader,
On a tour abroad-
Peace and pleasure in inland.

Security beefed up
in police station!
Rifles stolen!

Filed his nomination
With a procession of a thousand persons
Secured fifty votes!

Where is the answer?
Not only the students
But also the questions were unable to find it.

The reader and librarian
had a sound sleep!
But the books never slept.

The Will wrote down by the father
'Everybody has equal share-
In my death!'

He slept forgetting to take
The medicine
Which never forgot him.

The answers asked a question
'Dear student
Will you get success?'

Party members boycotted the conference
Dissatisfied with-
The Food arrangements.

Borrowed smile-
How long will be there
in the lips?

He who asked for a place in the boat
was keeping a storm
in his pocket!

The Minister who was sacked
Issued a press release
'Hereafter I will work for our country's welfare.'

The operation was a success
but the patient was a different person
who did not need the operation.

The fish from the fish tank
while dropped at the pond
swam to a distance of the fish tank.

Thousands of words in hand
but unable to write a Poem
Dictionary!

The wife while giving a send off
Told with tears:
Please do not forget to send money

Modernist verses of Abdul Rahman

The Witness

White-dotted
Black is
murdered by the White.
In the green-colored
Tongues of
The earth
Droplets of blood
Which try to
Transform as Words.

The force of the body

"Freedom is
my birthright"
shouted the Jail.
The Life-Time prisoner
Who was within
laughed at it.

Five Year Plan
If boons
Would become
Curses
Then
Why should
There be
Penances?

The Lightning
Fire crackers
in the festival at sky;
The fiery snakes
emitted by
The anthills called clouds;
The enlightened blabber of
The black lips;
The shorthand writing of
the oration of Thunder!

Beyond The Yonder

If you were
Widening the horizons,
All the directions will follow you
showering flowers on you.

Cross the ends!
Endless ends will be there
In your presence!

Your journey
Should not aim at
Just walking
But to cross
And pass over!

The roots
Should not be given
Any dead-end.
They wish to
Put cradles
Even on branches which
have not yet protruded.

Those who
Aim at reachable goals
And relax afterwards
Will be pitied upon by
The truths which are there
In the distant place
Beyond the yonder places.

The sun
which is unable to cross the fence
and fall down bleeding
will not be accepted by the sky.

Come on.
Pass over the targets successfully.
Your ego
which was
In an elated mood once
Will be getting
a farewell from darkness.

Full stops
Are never
Graveyards to end sentences.
They are the wombs of
the new thoughts
which are going to take a shape.
Hence—
In the end of every target
You are born afresh.

Your journey
Should compose music
In the rhythm of
The smashing sound
Of the collapse of
The binding chains called 'ENDS.'

- *Thamizhanban*

Come on! Sing merrily!

When the hard rock clashes and
Dashes vehemently
Without any worry the creek sings
Sweet melodies mellifluously;
Even if difficulties dash against you
Come on sing like a creek!
Sing charmingly!

Black clouds in the sky
Bombard each other
Without any fear for the
Terrific thunderstorms
The lightning laughs at it
With a flash of smile bright!
If troubles dash in your life
Happily laugh at them!
Enrich your thinking!
Bloom! Be cheerful!
Bright vision and right decision
should lead you to heights.

Neither hurricane nor tempest
Can shake the Assembly of stars;
Without any fear, they smile brightly.,
Driving away darkness, they adore the sky;
Whatever storm that meets you in life
Should never bother you!
Laugh away your worries!
Brighten up your mind!
Cheer up your heart!

Even if our hands bang and beat
The Drum is never hurt;
It produces rhythmic treat
To make us dance with joy!
If misery and grief strike you
Please don't get shattered!
Let sweet music fill up your heart
Brush up suddenly!
Let your mind absorbed in music
Come on! Sing merrily!

- Minnoor Seenivasan

Hi! Youth!

Do not say I am empty-handed
It is unwise;
A big fortune your ten fingers may raise.

What is the price of this ball like globe?
If you attain name and fame
That will be the befitting price.

Arise! Awake!
Before your fiery eyes
Even the sun will look like a tiny spark!

East will not dawn in its course!
We have to tear it off to make it red!

You have got a tiger's strength!
Frustration is a spider's web!
Do you intend to sleep in it?

Arise! Awake! my dear friend!
Your awakening will yield
A great revolution in Nature's course;

Eat to live! Do not live to eat!
Do not let yourself as a feast for lethargy!
Let us show a new direction to the wind!

The fingers are meant for fruitful labor!
Is there any justice in keeping them idle?

Youth is meant for better molding
It is not an age to go the burial field!

Before you reach the age of thirty
Why this wheezing? Is it not dirty?
Should you give your body
as an abode for crimes and wrongs?

Hurry up! Your fingers are farming tools.
They will harvest gold even in barren fields!

Exercise your body!
Teach it self- respect!

Do not believe in fate!
Science gives you the strength to fight!

How taller Himalayas stands!
Your head should stand as another peak!

Live as prominent as a pointing finger
Lying idle please don't waste your life!

Shoulders are your working tools!
Every place you touch will turn as
Flower-garden!

How many saints have born in this land!
Can't you exceed them by following their teachings?

Do you consider this world as a hollow nothing?
Why have you got so much frustration?

You can control
The revolving force of the globe
by your thumb!.

You have got the strength of science and technology
to change the direction of the sun!

Come on Stand up!
Show your might!
Even the height of the sky is below your hip!

- Thaaraa Bharati

Where is our east?

Where is our east?
Where is our dawn?
The darkness is still there;
The red sun has not yet arrived;
The day has not dawned;
We have no idea
About the eastern direction.

The time to wake up has come;
But there is no light in our area;
Unless we tear it
There will not be any dawn in the east!
Where is our east?
Where is our dawn?

Let us put a bloody tilak
Where there is darkness spread
The bloody Tilak is the red sun
Let us call it as the east!
Shout it with might!

The sun which is beyond our reach
Illuminates a part of the world and
Darkens the other part;
The shoulders of the working class
Will illuminate the whole world hereafter!
Let us call it as the east!
Shout it with might!

If all the powers were united
Then in all directions there will be sunlight
Even if we call in midnight
The sun will give light1
Let us call it as the east!
Shout it with might!

- Thaaraa Barathi

Death- Bell to Caste

What are they going to achieve
by fostering casteism?
Throwing away all morals
They try to divide the mankind!
Ostracize them mercilessly
For their evil designs pre-planned.
Our fury and angry outburst
Will make them disappear

- Kadavoor Manimaran

Let it be destroyed

Let the ignorance be removed;
Let the youth agitate
And perform a dynamic lead
Like Lion cubs!
Crush and destroy the atrocities
Which humiliate the mankind!
Drive away the fascist
Frenzies that spoil humanism!
Dash and damage the
Useless Illusions forever!
Violations of human rights
Should be exposed
War should be proclaimed
To defend humanity!

- Kadavoor Manimaran

Let us create a New World

A world where there is no violence
A world which sings victoriously of peace,
A world where there is no perpetration on the poor,
A world where there is no vanity and false pride,
A world where the mind is as clear as a silvery moon,
A world where everybody lives a calm and content life
A world where there is no poverty and distress,
We can create and make the mankind be happy forever.

- Manivendhan

Let us make our country rise high

Our country welcomes every one
We love every one who visits here
But with an evil motive
The aggressors intrude our land
Without minding their precious lives
Our soldiers fight in the border
They never hesitated to sacrifice
For the cause of our safety
Let us salute our soldiers
Let us render our help to them

We never intended to create disasters
We never wanted to wage wars
We never moved in the direction of
Wiping out human lives
With an ambition to loot our land
Our enemy wants to stab in our back
Teach a lesson to the dishonest neighbor
Destroy them without any delay.

They befriended like beloved brothers
Cheated us like a cunning fox
We have now understood their true colors
No need of any hesitation
It is high time to defend our nation
With the grace of Goddess Kali
We will drive away our enemies
Let our country shine with pride

- Soundara Kailasam

Please throw away

Throw them out, banish them
Expel them-comrades
While we are working for a noble cause
Whoever stands as barricades to us,
When we plan to put a strong base
For the welfare of our motherland
Those who always carry selfish motives
And put impediments to us,
Should be thrown out
Throw them out, banish them
Expel them-comrades

While we are working
For constructive schemes
From dawn to dusk
Those who give hindrance
Prevent our work
And wish to disturb our work
Should be thrown out
Throw them out, banish them
Expel them-comrades

With the help of the great power
Mankind has acquired
When we try to eradicate poverty
And drive away diseases
Those who want only

To fill up their stomach
Threaten us and oppose our agenda
Should be thrown out
Throw them out, banish them
Expel them-comrades

Those who want poverty to spread
Those who wish to reduce productivity
Those who want the rule of the anarchy
Those who want the mankind to be divided
With various religions and divisions
Should be thrown out
Throw them out, banish them
Expel them-comrades

Those who wish to be the bigger brothers
Those who become the stooge of cruelty
Those who want the ruling power with them
Should be thrown out
Even if they have
The God with them
Throw them out, banish them
Expel them-comrades

- Ponnadiyan

No! No!

We do not want Slavery
Please do not be a subordinate to others.

Half stomach porridge is enough
Worn out dress is enough
Even though we work for a daily wage
We will be much happier
We do not want Slavery
Please do not be a subordinate to others.

We do not want the luxury of a bungalow
We do not want prestige and pompous life
We have the support of our labor
Let us go in our own way
We do not want Slavery
Please do not be a subordinate to others.

We do not need the relationship of politicians
We do not want the petty jobs with bowing heads
We do not want to loose our rights
Just for the sake of a sumptuous meal
We do not want Slavery
Please do not be a subordinate to others.

- Ponnadiyan

NOTES ON THE POETS

K.C.S.Arunachalam (1921-1999)

K.C.S.Arunachalam, after completing his school education, joined the socialist movement and later the communist movement. In the Communist party he worked as a pamphleteer. He actively worked for the propaganda of Communist ideology and found he can communicate effectively through poetry. He never used stilted language. Direct communication through simple and relevant words was his approach in poetry.

By using simple words, he conveyed a strong appeal to the readers and his poems will be carrying an in-depth meaning. His first volume of poems published in the year 1965 was titled "Kavithai en kaivaal" (Poetry is my dagger).

"Paattu varaatha kuyil" (A Cuckoo that became unable to sing) was the second volume of his poems (1985).

He had written a number of plays for All India Radio, but they had not been compiled and published yet.

He proved his talent in story writing and a compilation of his short stories were published under the title"Purvika soththu"(Ancestral property) in 1965.

He was a popular lyric writer for Tamil films and his lyrics had a strong influence of folk songs.

He had been the Editor of Thaamarai, the literary monthly published by the communist Party of India.

Bold and unbiased, K.C.S.Arunachalam gained an important place among the modern poets, by his unique style and progressive views.

2.Soundara Kailasam

Tmt.Soundara (1927) was born in a village by name Chettipalaiyam which is near Karur, in the banks of River Amaravathi.She was the eldest daughter of Thiru.C.S.Sundara Gounder and Tmt.Kaliammal.Her maternal grandfather Thiru.Rethnasabapathy gounder was a close associate of Rajaji.When Rajaji founded Gandhi Ashram in Pudhuppalaiyam near Thiruchengode it was Rethnasabapathy Gounder who gave

the land for that ashram. Periyar E.V.R., who was the President of Tamilnadu Congress Committee at that time, opened the ashram.

Mahatma Gandhi, Kasthurbai Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru and other prominent leaders of Freedom Movement had visited the ashram. Soundara's mother Tmt.Kaliyammal was a close friend of Rajaji's daughter Tmt.Lakshmi Devadas Gandhi. They had woven a Khadhi Sari, which adored Tmt.Kaliyammal as her marriage dress.

The affiliation to national movement and association with great leaders of the freedom movement of her grandparents built up a strong national outlook

In the mind of Soundara.Her father Sundara Gounder taught her poems from Periyapuranam, Thevaram, Silappadhikaram and Manimekalai.This added a deep love of Tamil Language and literature.

At her 14th year she got wedded to Thiru.P.S.Kailasam an advocate who practiced under the guidance of V.L.Ethiraj.Thiru Kailasam encouraged Soundara's literary activities. She used to attend many literary meetings held in Pachaiyappa's college. The students requested her to act as a Judge in an oratorical competetion. She was compelled to give a lecture on that occasion and her maiden speech enthralled the audience.

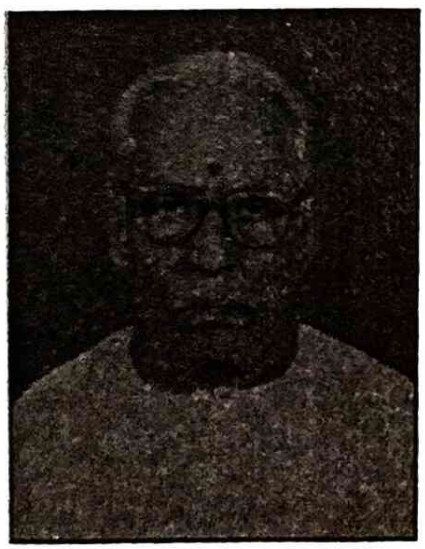
By the encouragement given by her Husband Thiru.Kailasam and appreciation from Tamil scholars, she spoke in many functions and gained international acclaim as one of the best orators in Tamil. Her literary discourses throughout the world are monumental evidence. Tamil Diaspora in U.S., U.K., Mauritius, Malaysia, Singapore and Srilanka many times invited her to give lectures in Tamil literature.

Her lectures will be always unique with perfect pronunciation, clear accents and lively intonations with a fine sense of humor.

Her poems had been published in eight volumes. The first volume titled 'Poems of Soundara Kailasam'got published in 1987 after the demise of Justice P.S.Kailasam.The book was dedicated to him. The poem 'Proudly dedicating it; please accept' is the first among all other poems and it definitely illustrates the abundant love and sincere gratitude of Soundara towards her husband whom she considers as her mentor and leader.

She deserves a special place among contemporary poets. She had participated in thousands of poetic symposia. Her deep involvement in devotion and strong love towards our motherland are well-expressed in her poems. She is praised as a 'Twentieth century Avvaiyaar.'

(Avvaiyar,a women poet.lived two thousand years ago who worked for a warless world .She avoided a war by her counseling to a king and perhaps she is the first Ambassadorwho worked for Peace and goodwill among two nations.)



3. Thamizhazhagan

Thamizhazhagan (1929) is famous for his rhythmic creations in Tamil poetry.

Nobody knows that his name is V.Shanmugam, because his pen name is widely known

for more than half a century, through Tamil magazines, newspapers and All India Radio.

In the years, 1947 to 1949, 'Ponni',a Tamil literary magazine widely acclaimed in scholarly circles, introduced a group of poets as Descendants of Bharatidasan (Bharatidasan Paramparai).

Forty-eight poets were introduced by Ponni at that time. Among them only a few are living now.Thamizhzhagan is one among the few poets who were once introduced by 'Ponni.'

This octogenarian, though he has written a lot, has only brought out two compilations of his poems."Thamizhazhagan kavithaikal" and "Oliyaith thedi" are the volumes of his poems. The books titled,"Mazhalai amutham" and "Poo maththaappu" are his contributions to the field of Children's literature.

He has with him more than a Lakh (100,000) poem as script. If they got published he will be the Vyasa of Tamilnadu.Even though Thamizhazhagan is a believer, he stands for an egalitarian society devoid of caste and superstition.

In a competition conducted by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, Thamizhazhagan secured the first prize for his poem.

He had also written lyrics for Tamil films. His songs and lyrics, written for All India Radio, are being enjoyed by the listeners for more than half a century.

He was awarded the "Paavendhar viruthu" by the Government of Tamilnadu Many literary associations and NGOs have honored him with awards for his outstanding service to Tamil literature.

4. THAMIZHANBAN

Thamizhanban (1933) considers Bharatiyar and Bharatidasan as his mentors. His poem on Thiruppur Kumaran-who sacrificed his life, holding the tricolor flag in his hands and chanting '*vandhe maatharam*' in spite of the brutal attack of the policemen during British regime speaks for his national spirit.It is written in the form of a folk-ballad, for recital in the folk-entertainment called *'Villuppaattu'*. It is his first book published in the year 1968.

For the past forty years, Thamizhanban's pen is creating wonderful and thought-provoking poems.

In 1970 appeared his first volume of poems titled "*Thamizhanban Kavithaikal*"(Poems of Thamizhanban). Till date he has brought 32 collections of poems, 16 Prose works and 3 books in the field of Children's literature His poetical tribute to Thiruvalluvar,titled"Vanakkam Valluva" secured him the Sahitya akademi award in the year 2004.

Thamizhanban is unparalleled in his futuristic vision, craving for a world without war. He wants the whole mankind to stand united shunning away the national and ethnic identities

Satire becomes a powerful weapon in his poems, staging a merciless attack on all social evils. His sarcastic notes on the follies of men belonging to all walks of life aim at restructuring the society into an egalitarian one.

His thirty-two volumes of poems are kaleidoscopic in their forms and techniques.

Thamizhanban has authored many narratives in free verse; they are well documented and skillfully told in lucid language; the form and content are complimentary and they have a powerful message to convey to the society.

Thamizhanban tells through this narrative that the oppressed cannot be kept oppressed for a very long time, and this is the time for them to achieve emancipation by their united efforts

Thamizhanban acts as an emancipator through his poems. He strives for the emancipation of women, emancipation of Dalit, emancipation of the working class and downtrodden.

Thamizhanban's broad outlook and his sincere efforts to achieve peace and amity through his poetic career have no comparison.

He is a myriad-minded artist who has proved his skills in various ways.

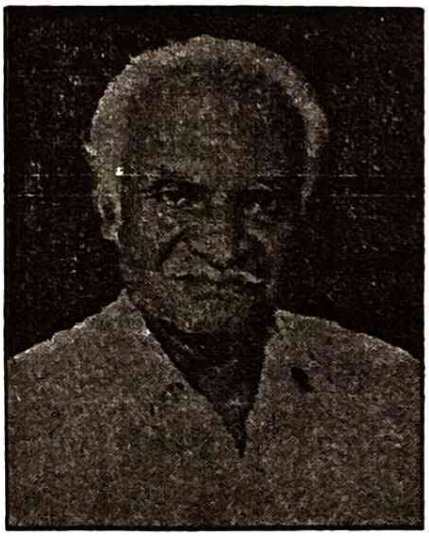
He is a novelist, essayist, drama-script writer, and a fine performing artist, reciting poems in Kavi mushairaas stealing away the audience by his thought-provoking puns and subtle wit.

His command of language and his artistic skills in evolving innovative techniques of poetic expression make his poems unique. The leading critics in Tamil literature hail him as a "Sculptor of Poetic images". He is successful in producing private symbols and mixing them with the universal symbols. By this kind of fusion he challenges his readers to explore the inner

meaning of his poems by finding their own interpretations, thereby establishing a co-authorship to unravel the poetic beauty of his symbolic poems.

Thamizhanban is a pioneer in attempting to create new varieties of poems in Tamil following Japanese models.Senryu and Limeraiku are the new genres introduced by him to Tamil poetry.

His 'ode to Walt Whitman' (Un viittukku vandhirundhen Walt Whitman) is unique in its international outlook and universal appeal. He is an ardent reader and admirer of Pablo Neruda.



5. M.LThangappa

Among the poets who belong to Bharatidasan School, M.L.Thangappa (1934) is a rare personality. He is an English scholar and has an exemplary proficiency of Tamil classics and grammar. In his poems we can not see even a single word borrowed from other languages. The chaste Tamil diction is mingled with powerful expression in his poems. At the same time he avoids, a pedantic and pompous style, which will form an iron curtain to the readers from the author.

Simple and elegant style is the unique feature in his poem.

M.Lenin Thangappa served as an English teacher in High schools at Tamilnadu and Puducherry for more than a decade.

Later he did is Masters Degree in Tamil and switched over to Tamil teaching at Government arts colleges in Puducherry. He retired from service in 1994.

He was a close associate of late Perunchiththiranar, another Tamil poet of the Bharatidasan School and founder-Editor of "Thenmozhi",a literary journal of repute.

In 1973 M.L.Thangappa's first volume of poems,"Paadukinren", was published. Sixteen volumes of his poems have been published till dateThedukinren (1980),

Aandhaip paattu(1983),Adich chuvadukal(1983),veppang kanigal (1985), Kallummondhaiyum (1987), Iyarkaiyaatruppadai (1989), Mayakkuru makkal (1990), Akamum puramum (1991), Pinnirundhu oru kural (1992), Panip paarai nunikal (1998), Puyarp paattu (2000), and Paattenum vaal etuppay(2008) are his other compilations got published.

He has also authored books for the children. Four volumes of poems have been published by him for children.

Eight volumes which consist of compilation of his essays have also been published.

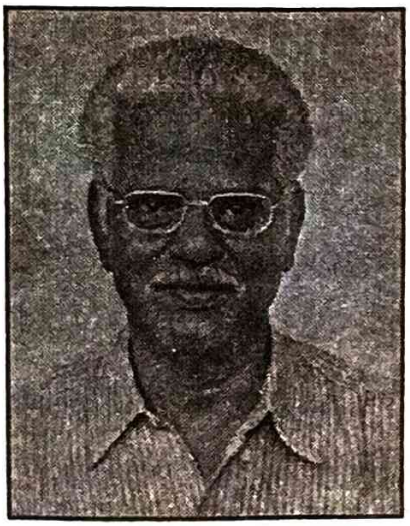
M.L.Thangappa is an internationally acclaimed translator of Sangam classics. His translation work of sangam classics titled" Hues and Harmonies from an ancient land" got an overwhelming response from scholars when it was published in 1970.It seems he is planning to bring out more translations of Sangam classics in a second volume, soon.

Songs of Grace (Translation of selected hymns from St.Ramalinga's Thiruvarutpa) published in 1985, Selected Poems from Baratidasan (1992), and House of Darkness (Translation of Bharatidasan's narrative poem titked 'Irunda vidu') published in [illegible] is other translation works.

A volume of poems in English titled" Meadow Flowers" has been published by him (1984), which stands as an evidence for his scholarship and creative talent in English.

Many Russian poems were translated into Tamil by him, from their English texts.

In 1991, he received the Bharatidasan award from the Government of Tamilnadu .Many literary associations and NGOs have honored him with awards. He is an active member in many voluntary organizations and doing his service to the land and community, thereby proving he practices what he propagates.



6. Poovai Amuthan

"Poovai Amuthan" (1934) is the pen name of Mr.S.R.Govindarajan, who after 36 years of teaching Tamil in schools, is now a freelancer. For the past four decades he is continuously contributing Tamil poems, publishing them in various literary journals. He has brought out seven volumes as compilation of his poems.

His versatility is unquestionable. To his credit there are hundreds of titles. He has authored hundreds of books, which can be classified in 9 categories. To be brief, I will give the categories and the number of titles he has authored.

1. Poems - 7 Volumes
2. Novels-24
3. Compilations of Short stories-38
4. Biographies-18
5. Exponential approaches to Literature-9
6. Compilations of essays—23
7. Prose works—9
8. Dramas—2
9. Children's Literature—118 Books(All categories)

The total books authored by him number247.He is also a prolific lyric-writer and he has composed more than 600 songs. Almost all the leading play-back singers of South India have rendered mellifluous music for his lyrics and 58 cassettes have been released so far.Poovai Amuthan is the first poet to write an epic on 'Aids awareness' titled, "Uyir uravu" which had won an award from Tiruppur Tamil sangam.His drama for children," kiraamaththup paiyan"(The Village boy") had won him a gold medal as the first prize from A.V.M.Trust.If we begin to enlist the laurels and accolades he had gained for his books, we will need a separate book for it.

Abolition of caste and communal feelings is not a virtue to be loudly shouted in stages but to be followed at the house itself.Poovai Amuthan has a noble heritage of a broad outlook, neglecting communal feelings and he acts as a role model for us to shun communal differences.

He advocates for Humanism and his poems plead with the readers to adopt humanism as their religion.

Poovai Amuthan has always a soft corner for the underprivileged and the have-nots. He does not aspire to be the poet laureate but he sincerely wishes to be a poet for the down-trodden and a song-composer for the working class.

7. Va.Mu.Sethuraman

Va.Mu.Sethuraman (1935), popularly known as Vaa.Mu.See, and respectfully called as "PerungKavikko" (Great among Poets), is one among the rare kind of poets. Through his poems he wishes to propagate and attain universal brotherhood in the global village. Wedded to lofty maxims and committed to sublime values, he always craves for peace and international solidarity.

For a period of more than four decades, his pen is busily engaged in the fight against atrocities committed on the economically weaker section of society and exploitation of the downtrodden. To his credit he has produced 65 volumes of poems which consist more than one hundred thousand stanzas of poems whose essence is nothing but humanism.

Born in a tiny village to an agriculturist, it was considered as an achievement of Vaa.Mu.See, when he became a schoolteacher. But he did not contend with this.

The trials and tribulations of the middle-class family did not prevent him from spending money for further education. His consistent efforts got him the postgraduate degree and thereafter Ph.D.He.could have become a lecturer in a college thereby improving his financial status. But he never thought to earn wealth or to acquire prestigious posts. As a schoolteacher, he found more freedom to run a magazine, to bring more volumes of poems and to organize agitations for noble causes.

Many a time V.M.Sethuraman organized protest rallies and was imprisoned. When he was at the age of Ten, he wanted to associate himself with the freedom movement, and served as a volunteer moving closely with the Indian National Congress leaders of his region. His thirst for freedom went to such an extent that he refused to attend English classes during his school days. Now after attaining freedom, he is striving for the past four decades to remove English and replace Tamil as the medium of instruction.

For this cause he had convened Hundreds of conferences and organized several agitations.

V.M.Sethuraman has dedicated his whole time and energy for the uplift of Tamil and he is meticulously working for the past four decades, for its modernization in all disciplines.

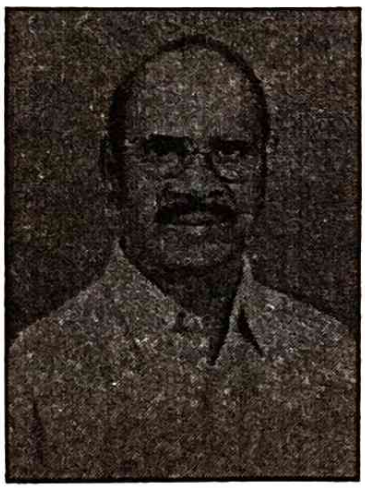
V.M.Sethuraman is not only a Tamil savant but also a poet who envisages the whole world as a family. He is the only poet who has flown around the world for more than thirty times. He considers the whole mankind as his kith and kin. He longs for a world without war.

He shuns religious fundamentalism. The teachings of Jesus, Prophet Mohammed were unable to change the war-

mongering nations who mercilessly indulge in ruthless genocide of the innocent people.

He has got a clear and open mind and appreciates various countries with a view to exhibit their special characteristics. He has written many poems on almost all the countries he has visited and he is the only poet who has written travelogue in verse.

He works for the emancipation of mankind from the clutches of oppression, religious fundamentalism and racism. Not only India but also the entire mankind should be proud to have such a poet who always acts as a missionary with a zest and zeal to redeem the mankind from all sorts of evils.



8. Mu.Ilangkannan

Mu.Balakrishnan (1935), whose pen-name is Ilangkannan, is a rare kind of poet. He is a renowned statistician and retired as an Additional Director of Statitistics, Government of Tamilnadu.

We can not imagine a statistician will also prove his ability in the art of poetic writing.

Facts and fancy are the two extremes and here we can see Ilangkannan, who has performed the wonder of master[illegible]

two different faculties. He had received many laurels for his performance in the field of statistics as well as for his poetic talents.

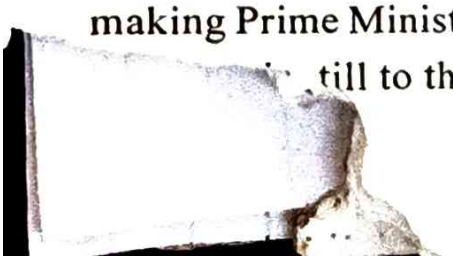
His first book, a compilation of his poems titeld"Thaen malar" was appreciated by Suratha, a literary giant, and Suratha himself volunteered to get it published.

Ilangkannan to his credit has authored an epic. While people ignore prosody and wish to write free verse, Ilangkannan,a statistician tried his best to follow the rules laid down by prosody works and gift the Tamils an epic unique in its matter and manner.

While most of the epics, except a few, try to promote superstitions and religious fanaticism, his epic outshines others. This epic does not follow its predecessors in praising God and having a god or a saint as its hero.

This epic has chosen its hero from the ordinary people. The legendary leader Kamaraj, a representative of the common man, is the hero of this epic titled"Kaamaraasar kaaviyam."The biography of the late leader Kamarajar is

narrated in a superb way through fine poetry. It may also be considered as a History of Tamilnadu written in verse. The atrocities of the British regime, the emergence of the National movement, the struggle for freedom by our ancestors,Kamarajar's participation in various agitations against the then British rule, the sacrifices he had done for the country, the achievement of freedom, the situations that led to the rise of Kamarajar as a powerful leader, Kamarajar as an efficient Chief Minister of Tamilnadu, Kamarajar as a dynamic President of the Indian National Congress, Kamarajar a King-maker who had a role in making Prime Ministers and his other achievements are described till to the sad demise of the leader.



We can not find in any other Indian language an epic like this, which describes the freedom movement in a detailed manner.

Ilangkannan's book on Thirukkural,titled" The Design and Composition of Thirukkural" is an interdisciplinary approach to Thirukkural.His scholarship in Statistics is utilized to give a new explanation to the formalistic elements of Thirukkural.

Ilangkannan actively takes part in many literary conferences and meetings.

He had rendered recital of his poems in such meetings as well as through Radio and Television. He is still continuing his poetic career with much enthusiasm and is widely appreciated for his poems.

9. Vezhavendan

Poet Vezhavendan (1936) associated himself with the Self-respect movement founded by Periyar E.V.R.during his student days and later worked under the leadership of C.N.Annadurai as an active member of the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam.

Usually it is said that poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world. But in the case of Poet Vezhavendan he is an acknowledged legislator of Tamilnadu.He was a m

legislative assembly of Tamilnadu, elected twice. (1967&1971) He was also the Minister of Labor in the Tamilnadu Government for a term.

Poet Vezhavendan always stood for the cause of Tamil and the uplift of the downtrodden and still working for those ideals.

His first volume of poems titled "Vezhavendan kavithaikal" was released by the late and revered Anna, the celebrated leader of Tamils, on 1963.

For a period of more than five decades he is contributing to the field of Tamil poetry, his poems- sublime, rhythmic and inspiring.

His other volumes of poems are:

Vannath thogai (Colorful wings of the Peacock)

Ekkangalin thaakkangal (Impact of the yearnings)

Thooralum saaralum (Drizzling and the cool Mountain)

Thamizaa engke pokiraay (Oh! Tamil!Where are you going?)

Anal moochchu (The Fiery Sigh)

He is also a short story writer and he has published a compilation of his stories under the title "Vezhavendan cirukathaikal."

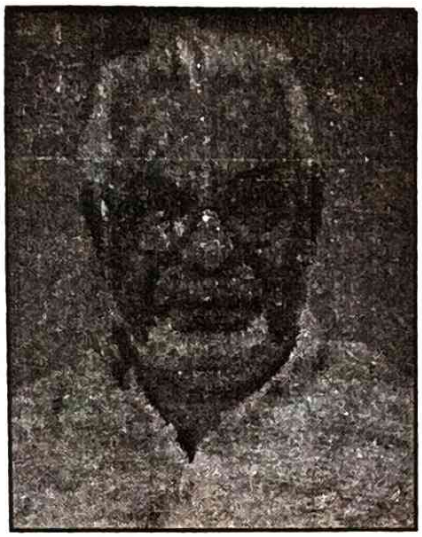
"Theriya...Theliya","Thamizaa? Amizhthaa?"Manakkaattuth thenadaikal and Vetrikku oru mutrukai" are compilations of his essays.

Vezhavendhan has composed many poems, which sing the glory of Mother Tamil. His love for Tamil knows no bounds, and his poems also have the capability of inducing such an affinity towards Mother Tamil in the minds of readers.

Born in an agricultural family in a village fifty miles away from Chennai, the poet had been brought up in the midst of Paddy

fields, greenery and gardens. With the help of his photographic memory he recollects the village sequences and natural scenes. With his powerful communication skills and narrative techniques he again creates those sequences and scenes thereby presenting a fine verbal portrait.

Vezhavendan's poems must be read and enjoyed for their musical rhythm as well as for their thought-provoking content. The poet wishes to make the world a Garden of Eden with international fraternity and peace.



10. Abdul Rahman

Syed Abdul Rahman was born (1937) in Madurai, Tamilnadu. Abdul Rahman joined as a Tamil lecturer in the Islamia College, Vaniyambadi. For twenty years he had been the Professor and Head of Department of the Tamil faculty, before he opted for voluntary retirement to devote his time totally to literature. He has also served as the Editor of dailies like 'Tamil Nadu' and 'Tamizhan' from Chennai and a literary magazine from Sivagangai. Pioneer of surrealism in modern Tamil poetry, Syed Abdul Rahman is the author of around two-dozen books. He has

translated the works of the Urdu poet Iqbal in Tamil. Among his noted works are *Paal Veedi*, *Neyar Viruppam*, *Muttai Vaasigal*, *Suttu Viral*, *Karaigale Nadiyavadillai* and *Indriravu Pagalil*. His adaptation of the Japanese poetic form of Haiku and the Urdu Ghazal has helped enrich contemporary Tamil poetry. He is the 1999 Sahitya Akademi awardee for his collection of poems *Aalapanai*. He has received several other awards and honors such as the State Government's 'Kalaimamani' title (1989) and Agni Akshara Award (1992).

Abdul Rahman is a crowd puller in poetic symposia, for the past four decades. His captive poetic images and puns attract the audience very much like the music of a popular musician.

Abdul Rahman is an avant-garde among modern Tamil poets. Technical innovation and thematic surprise are the predominant literary principles underlying his creative process. By constantly employing sophisticated and innovative techniques he makes his poems look like statues carved out of ivory.

He is a profound scholar in traditional literature and an adept in modernist techniques. His traditional knowledge does not bar him in his deconstruction of universal symbols in his poems.

His poems predominantly contain intellectual appeal. But he is concerned to appeal to the head and heart simultaneously, whereas his modernist techniques hinder the average reader from grasping the emotional elements instantly.

While every word in its order gives deep meaning in his poems if we shift the words, the inner beauty gets distorted.

The beauty of the language, the power of words, the magic of verbal portraits and the art of poetry find their supreme nature in Rahman's poetry.

11.MINNOOR SEENIVASAN

Minnoor Srinivasan (1939) is one among the famous poets of Tamilnadu, noted for his dedication to Nature poetry. He is also one among the pioneers who took the cause of developing literature for the younger ones. Avoiding nonsensical rhymes and absurd verbal gymnastics for children, he always uses lucid language with crisp phrases and catchy idioms. Both the form and content of his poems try to mend the young minds in the correct path to grasp lofty ideals and noble thoughts.

After Thirty-three years of service at various Government colleges in Tamilnadu, the poet retired from service as a Head of the Tamil department Presidency College, Chennai.

He is writing poems for more than five decades in many literary journals including Kalaimagal, Amuthasurabhi, Manjari, Kavithamandalam, and Ilanthamizhan.

His lyrics on National Integration found an important place in All India radio.

During Chinese aggression, his songs were daily broadcast and were appreciated for their poetic diction and strong appeal to the people.

His first volume of poems titled "Mazhalaik kanavugal"(1965) got appreciation from Tamil scholars and literary circles.

"Minnoor seenivasan Kavithaikal", his second volume of poems, is not only a thought-provoking collection but also a valuable social document depicting the modern life with all its complications.

His"Vanna Vanna Minkal" (1973) is the best work in Children's literature, which not only deserve appreciation but also need to be propagated among school children.

"Kanmanippaattu"(1996), a collection of songs and rhymes in Tamil, is a laudable venture which deserves appreciation from both sections, the younger ones who are in search for the best books they can read, and the lovers of poetry who crave for poems with a humanist mission.

The work "Kanmanippaattu" may rightly be called as a classic among the children's literature.

Minnoor Seenivasan is a multifaceted genius. He has a profound knowledge of Classical music and he is an able player of Sitar (a string instrument of music).

He is a talented artist and his drawings of Periyar E.VR.and Bharati are laudable attempts.

His prose works include biographies of poet Kambadasan and Tamil scholar Mu.Varadarajan.An analysis of Renaissance poetry in Tamil and an exponential work on Bharatiyar's 'Kuyilpattu' are his commendable contributions to the field of Literary criticism in Tamil.

Minnoor Seenivasan is hailed as the Tagore of our age. His multidimensional perspective, deep delving in aesthetics, metaphysical insight and inspiring introversion in his poems serve as powerful sources of motivation for a serious reader. This in-depth approach is his unique specialty.

12. Maniventhan (Mu.Pi.Balasubramanian)

Professor.Mu.Pi.Balasubramanian (1939), whose pen-name is Maniventhan, has done a wonderful service to Tamil language and literature as a poet, scholar, literary critic and journalist.

As a poet he has brought out many collections of his poems and had participated in many poetic symposia for the recital of his poems His compilations of poems published so far:

Cheenaththup parani-1965

Eththanai kodi inbam-1969

Kavithai megangkal-1979

Maniventhan kavithaikal-1980

Mu.Pi.Pa.Kavithaikal-1990

His book titled "Kavithai megangkal" was awarded the First prize for poetical works in the year 1982 by the government of Tamilnadu

In the year 1990, he received the Bharatidasan viruthu from the Government of Tamilnadu.

In a function organized by the D.M.K party he was awarded the Paaventhar. Viruthu in the year 2005.

As a Professor he had served for more than Three decades In Pachaiyappa's college (Chennai&Kanchipuram) and retired as a Principal. Under his supervision Seventeen scholars had been awarded M.Phil.Degree and ten scholars had obtained their Ph.D.Degree

As an organizer, he had convened many literary meetings, seminars and conferences to propagate Thirukkural, Sangam classics and Tamil culture.

As a scholar he had participated in many International conferences and seminars and had presented many research papersThe following books bear evidence to his scholarship and critical acumen.

Vanithaasan Kavithaikal-Oor Aayvu—1986

ilakkiyap punnakai-1988

Cirupaanaatruppadaic celvam-1989

Vanithaasan Ilakkiyath thiran-1989

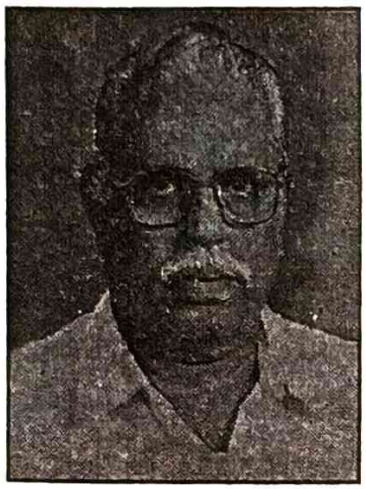
Ilakkiyap puthaiyal—1999

Ithazhiyal pathivukal-1999

As a writer he had written many short stories.A compilation of his stories titled"Anaiyaa vilakku" was published in the year1991.

He is also a drama script writer.His drama titled "Manamalli" was published in 1990.

Mu.Pi.Balasubramanian(Maniventhan) is a multifaceted genius,and he is continuing his service to Tamil as Vice-President of the Ariviysal Thamizh Manram,an autonomous body,maintained by the Government of Tamilnadu.



13. Amutha Bharati

Haiku, a Japanese genre ,has now become a universal literary trend, by its deep impact in many languages.Subramania Bharati,the morning star of modern Tamil poetry, had appreciated this and had published some translations of Japanese Haiku in Tamil.Bharatidasan,had also appreciated this genre. But these great poets did not venture to follow this Haiku in Tamil.M.K.Thayumanavar whose pen-names are Amuthabharati and Amuthon (1939), a modern poet who belongs to Bharatidasan School, is the pioneer to introduce Haiku as a literary genre in Tamil.

He has brought four volumes of Haiku poetry in Tamil. His Haiku poems were, first published in literary journals and later were compiled.

Pullip pookkal (1984) is the first and foremost volume of Haiku poems in Tamil.

The title'Pullip pookkal' literally means 'Flowers in dots' but the genuine translation for the title is" Miniature flowers." an apt name to denote Haikus.AmuthaBarathi created an awareness about Haiku in Tamilnadu as he is the pioneer in popularizing the Japanese genre in Tamilnadu.

Amuthabarathi is a renowned artist in Tamilnadu and he is very famous for his wrapper design and drawings. For more than four decades he is known for his amazing wrapper artwork. His talents in poetry as well as in design-work helped him in attempting new techniques in poetic composition.

He attempted a fusion of Japanese Haiku and Tamil prosody. This fusion can be seen in his Haiku Anthaathi (1989).

Anthaathi is a sub-genre in Tamil poetry. In anthaathi, one hundred poems have to be composed. The last line/word/letter of the first poem will be the first line/word/letter of the second poem. Then it repeats till the hundredth poem. The last line/word/letter of the hundredth poem will be the first line/word/letter of the first poem. He composed one hundred Haikus and has attempted the anthaathi technique in the hundred Haikus. This is his invention and a gift to the Tamil poetry.

Kaatrin kaikal (Hands of the Wind) published in 1990 and Aiku aruvikal(Haiku fountains)published in 1998,and Aiku vidhaikal(Haiku seeds), published in the year 2000, are his other works in Haiku.

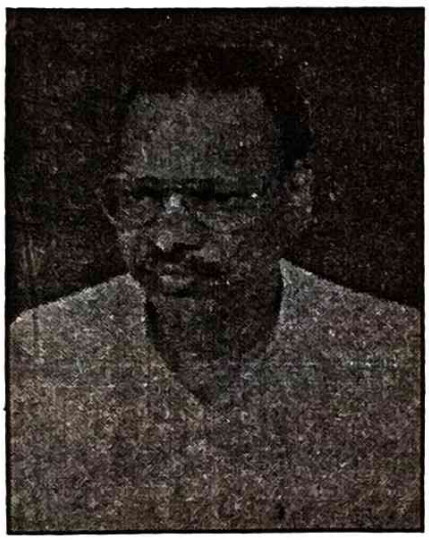
Apart from this he is a renowned poet in both traditional verse as well as New poetry The following volumes of his poems show his poetic genius in a fine manner.

aya kaalangal (Times of Dawn)-1982

Inai thedum ithayam(A heart which is in search of a companion)-1982

Manmatha raagangal (Melodies of the cupid)-1983

Nigazhkaala megankal (Clouds of the present day)-1983.



14. Ponnadiyan

Ponnadiyan (1940) is one among the close associates of Bharatidasan, and he is still cherishing the memory of the Revolutionary Poet through his writings and literary conferences.

During Bharatidasan's lifetime, Ponnadiyan was his close associate and he considered it as a great pleasure to assist the revolutionary poet, in his literary activities.Bharatidasan was running a literary journal "Kuyil" and Ponnadiyan took all the responsibilities as its assistant editor, Proof-reader and managing the delivery of the journal through post to its subscribers.

Bharatidasan founded a forum for Tamil poets and Ponnadiyan was its volunteer to conduct meetings and carry out other

activities. After Bharatidasan's demise, Ponnadiyan took charge of that association and is still maintaining the forum with the same vigor and efficiency for the past four decades. The Tamil Poets' forum is very famous for its poetic symposium held monthly in Chennai at Marina beach during every first Sunday evening.

He is also running a literary magazine titled"Mullaich charam" for the past forty-two years without fail.

By his forum and journal he has molded and shaped a number of youth as highly talented poets and writers for the past forty years.

"Panimalar" was his first volume of poems published in 1964.Afer that many volumes of his poems have been published.

Oru Kaithiyin paatalkal (A Prisoner's songs)

Oor ithayaththin ekkam (The longing of a heart)

Parakkath theriyaatha pattaampuuchchikal (Butterflies which do not know to fly)

Arangeri varukinra annapparavaikal (The 'Annam' birds which are coming to the stage)

Ponnadiyan kavithaikal (Poems of Ponnadiyan) [Two volumes]

Through his poems Ponnadiyan conveys powerful thoughts to provoke the younger generation. In a country where self-respect is not maintained due to poverty, ignorance and greed, by his messages, Ponnadiyan wishes to give advice to the younger generation to keep their dignity and maintain self-respect.

As an ardent follower of Periyar E.V.R. Ponnadiyan considers it as his duty.

His prose book titled "Ninaivalaikalil Pavendhar narrates his reminiscences of his days with the revolutionary poet, Bharatidasan.

His poems have been translated into several languages including English, Hindi and Persian.

He has been conferred with the title "Kalaimaamani" by the Government of Tamilnadu for the meritorius and worth-mentioning prolonged service in the field of art, literature and Tamil culture especially for his restless forty-five years of yeoman service for Tamil poetry.

He has also received the prestigious Bharatidasan award of the government of Tamilnadu.

For his dedicated service to the humanity through his poetic career, he was endowed with an award from UNESCO.

He is one of the popular lyric writers to Tamil films. He had served as a member of the Censor Board, Government of India.

15. Kalaimathiyan

Poet Kalaimadhiyan (1941) is one among the poets who be[illegible] to Bharatidasan School.

After serving as a teacher for thirty-five years, he retired from service and now he is actively participating in many literary activities throughout Tamilnadu.

Popularity is always wrongly considered as the touchstone of scholarship and Kalaimadhiyan has not got the proper recognition for his literary achievements.

His caliber, style and creativity are unique and deserve many laurels

He has published four volumes of his poems.

"Kalaimadhiyan kavithaikal",

"Nayan natakangkal",

"ManrangkaLil visiya thendral",

"Ninaivin chuvadukal",

and "Maiththuli makutangkal" are his contribution to Tamil poetry.

He has been awarded by many NGOs for his literary achievements.

Award Organization

Kannadasan viruthu—Kannadasan kalai ilakkiyap peravai, Chennai-40.

Kavignar Thilakam-Thiruvalluvar Ilakkiya manram, Vanuvampettai.

Bharati panich chelvar-All India Tamil writers Association.

Kavimamani viruthu-Bharati kalaik kazhagam.

Pavendhar Parathidasan viruthu-All India Tamil writers association, Puducherry.

Kavi gnani –Poet Suratha

[illegible]try -2001award-State bank of India.

16. Pon.Selvaganapathy

Pon. Selvaganapathy (1944) hails from Aadhivaraganatham village that is near Bhuvanagiri situated in the Chidambaram Taluk.He had his college education inAnnamalai Univetrsity.First he underwent the Pulavar course (an oriental title) and then B.O.L. degree course in this university from illustrious scholars. The proximity of his native village to his alma mater helped him take part in all the literary activities of the university.

Later Selvaganapathy pursued his Postgraduate course in Presidency College at Chennai. The city atmosphere made his literary efforts fruitful. The A.I.R. conducted a competition on 1970 for the youth to compose poems in which Selvaganapathy won the prize and recited the poem in a symposium presided by Kalaignar Mu.Karunanidhi.. A play written by him (Kavariman) was broadcasted by A.I.R.

When his first volume of poems titled "*Poems of Selvaganapathy*"was published (1972), he was a postgraduate student at Presidency College.

Kannadasan, a literary celebrity and a legend in his time who still reigns the hearts of Tamil readers by his lyrics,. gave a foreword in appreciation of this book. The foreword under the title "True poet is here" is in all praise for Selvaganapathy's poems. Let us see a section of the foreword.

"This volume of poems illustrates that Pon.Selvaganapathy is a very remarkable poet. When I came to know the poet is a student, the words that came spontaneously out of my lips were,: How mature he is at this young age!' Lofty ideals are expressed throughout this volume; Highlighting ethics follow suit. Tragedies, which occur in human life, are portrayed well. His love for Tamil had made him attack those who are not loyal to their mother tongue. Innovative imageries have blossomed. His political affiliation is explicit. The condemnation of racial apartheid shows his universal outlook.

In total the poet acts independently without any bias. Without confining himself to any particular standpoint, a poet should express what he considers as right and justifiable through his poems. In that way Selvaganapathy is a true poet very sincere to his career."

His mini-epic titled "Agitations against shadows"(*Nizhalgalai nokkiya poraattangal"*was his next publication(1975).It is a political satire which mocks at the sheep-mentality of the mass in choosing a leader and blindly following him "Justice under Detention" (*Kaithu ceyyappatta niyaayangal"*-1981),"Agonies of Independence"(*.Suthanthira sogangal"*-1996),Lapse of memory(*Gnapakap picaku*--2002)are his other volumes.

Pon.Selvaganapathy is an uncompromising personality widely acclaimed for his consistency in upholding values and norms in public and personal life. His merciless attack on the hypocrisy of political leaders and his pungent satire on the educated middle-class people for their compromise with the corrupt bureaucrats and immoral politicians are the unique features of his poems.

17. Kadavoor Manimaran

Kadavoor Manimaaran (1945) is an uncompromising personality, committed to the ideals of Periyar E.V.R. and Anna. He wants the society to move in the right direction providing equal opportunities for all irrespective of their religion, caste or creed.

During his student days he actively participated in the anti-Hindi agitations and was victimized by the institutions in which he underwent the Pulavar course. As a result he had to study the same course in three institutions namely, Ganesar Senthamizhk kalluri (Melaich chivapuri), Karanthaith Thamizhch changam (Thanjavoor) and Dharmapuram Thamizhk Kalloori.

He did his further education at Annamalai University, Chidambaram and obtained B.O.L.and M.A.degrees there. He was awarded Ph.D.for his comparative research on Bharatidasan and Perunchiththiran.

To his credit he has published Thirty six books, of which nineteen are volumes of his poems.

First volume of his poems titled"Naan Paadukiren"came out in 1979.

After that Eighteen volumes which are compilation of his poems have been published, His poetic talents have been appreciated by many literary associations, He had received many awards including

V.G.P.Santhanammaal award, Vikkiraman award and Thamizharasi award.

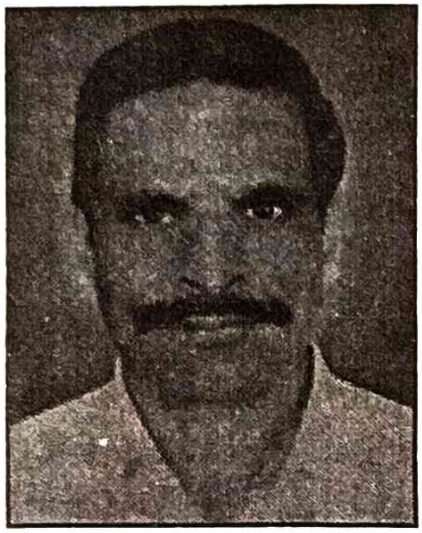
Apart from poetry, he has also authored many prose works. His essays on Self-development and confidence-building have been widely read and appreciated. Among such books"Unnai arivaay! Ulakai velvaay!"(Know yourself! Conquer the world!" deserves a special mention for its provoking content and lucid style.

"Manakkum Malaysia" and "Azhagiya Andhaman" are the travelogues written by him

He has also written a commentary to "Thirukkural."

He retired as a Principal of a Teachers college and still continuing his poetic career as a mission to serve the Tamil community.

Poet Kadavoor Manimaran envisages a socialistic society where there is no quarrel in the name of religion, no fights to acquire wealth and power in evil ways and no ignorance.



18. Thaaraa Bharati (1947-2000)

Thaaraa Bharati is an illustrious poet of Tamilnadu who had died a premature death at his early fifties. He can be described as the Mayakovsky of India for his highly motivating poems, which are still a source of inspiration for the youth.

His poems act as a morale-booster for the unemployed youth of Tamilnadu.

Those who read his poems will agree that they serve as a source of inspiration to the readers irrespective of their age and status.

Thaara Bharati mingled with the masses, particularly with the younger generation and motivated them by his poems, which still inspire the Tamil youth. It should be mentioned that many have achieved an upward mobility as his poems acted a catalyst to accelerate their initiatives.

For more than Three decades he served as a Tamil teacher. During this period, he paid more attention to students wh

to oppressed communities and conducted special coaching classes for them, foregoing his holidays and the leisure that is needed to take sufficient rest after work. His service was in villages adjacent to Vedanthangal, the famous bird-santuary.His house was a bird-sanctuary for poor students. In addition to curriculum he gave lectures on self-development to build confidence in the young students' minds. As a result, many of his students achieved higher positions in their lives.

The Radhakrishnan Award awarded by the Government of Tamilnadu on 2000 is just another evidence for his service. He never expected any award or reward and uplift of his students coming from poor families was his main concern.

Publications:

Compilation of Thaaraa Bharati's Poems

1. Puthiya vidiyalkal (New Dawns) — 1982
2. Ithu engal kizhakku (This is our east) -1989
3. Vivasaayam ivar vedham (Agriculture is his Holy Scripture) {About an agriculturist Thiru.Su.Muthumallaa}—1992
4. Viral nuni velichchangal (Flashes from the finger tips) ——2000
5. Thaaraa bharati kavitaikal (Poems of Thaaraa Bharati) —2001
6. Boomiyaith thirakkum Pon chavi (The Golden key to unlock the Earth) —2002

Prose work:

Pannaipuram thotangi Buckingham varai
From Pannaipuram to Buckingham) —1993.

19. Arivumathi

Poet Arivumathi is widely known for his strong commitment to Periyar's ideals and progressive views. He is one among the Tamil poets who took the initiative to introduce Haiku model poems in Tamil.

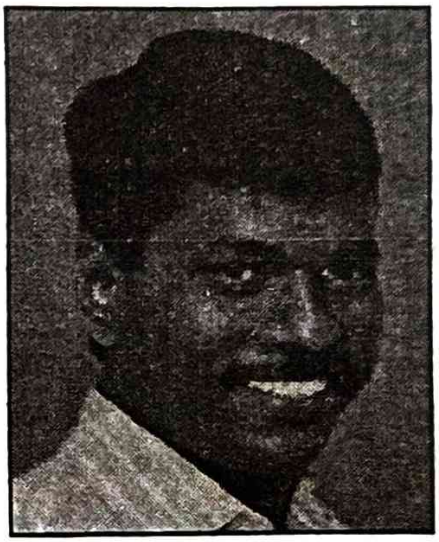
"En piriya vasanthame" is his first volume of poems which was published in 1977.

A collection of his Haiku poems, titled "Kadaisi mazhaith thuli" was published in 1996.Later three volumes titled ,"Aayulin anthivarai", "Natpuk kaalam" and "Vali" had been published.

Arivumathi is also a popular lyric writer for Tamil cinemas. Even in that field he shines as a unique star, for his firm conviction, that language should not be spoilt

in the name of entertainment. While most of the lyric writers prefer to use a language heavily corrupted by the usage of slang and borrowed words, Arivumathi always stand for a chaste Tamil, avoiding adulteration of Tamil by mixing borrowed words.

When it became the order of the trade to use a 'Creole' type of Tamil, sarcastically called as 'Tamilish', he declined to write lyrics for cinemas. While even Tamil Professors do not bother much about marinating a standard style avoiding borrowed words, Arivumathi stands for purity of language and deserve appreciation from the Tamil people.



20. Kavimugil

'Kavimugil' (1968) is the pen-name of A.P.Sakthivel, a poet who is worth mentionable for his Haiku model poems in Tamil.Kavimugil is shaped and molded as a prominent poet by his mentor Thaaraa barathi, an illustrious poet of Tamilnadu who had died a premature death at his early fifties.

Kavimugil got his source of inspiration from Thaaraa Barathi and he had his upward mobility from a middle-class job seeker to the affluent position, as the owner of an Auto-Financing company. Thaaraa Barathi awakened the poet in him.

Kavimugil is a trendsetter among the younger generation. His poems reveal his mature mind, which crave for a socialist state devoid of barriers in the name of Caste, Religion, Language and status. When his readers realize this and initiate steps in a democratic manner we are sure his dreams will be translated into social change.

He has brought out five volumes of poems:

Kavimugil kavithaigal (Poems of Kavimugil)

Sooriyath thuligal (Drops of sun)

Chinna Uligal (Tiny Chisels)

Kuppaigal (Thrashes)

Aarsuththippattu

Kaar kaalam is his prose book which gives an introduction about the various types of cars and a basic knowledge of the automobiles.

Ethiree un eeni (A Ladder in front of you) is another prose work which intends to promote self-confidence.

Kavimugil who is also the President of Automobile sellers' association has published many books on behalf of the association.

He has presided over more than fifty poetic symposia and had participated in many poetry recitals in many channels of Television including Pothigai TV,

Win TV and Makkal Tholaikkatci.

He is doing many welfare projects for the deserving poor and maintaning Charities.Roopavathi-Paavadaiyar Trust (In the name of his parents),

Kavimugil Trust and Thaaraa Bharati trust (in the name of his mentor) are the establishmehts maintained by him for his welfare schemes.

In Kavimugil we see a rare combination of two different personalities.

As a thought-provoking poet he motivates the younger generation by his poems.

At the same time he is serving the nation through his endowments. He is the befitting role-model for youngsters for his upward mobility winning over the trials and tribulations by his meticulous work.

His autobiography titled "Muchchandhi" surely will be a source of inspiration for youngsters who wish to achieve success in life.

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A Critical Review

By

Raj Arumugam

(Director, TTS world (Brisbane, Australia)

Two of the world's oldest, continuous and living literary traditions are those of Chinese and Tamil.

Yet Tamil literature, though enjoying much academic interest at universities worldwide, is still not much known outside specialist circles as compared to Japanese or Chinese poetry. Many poets writing in English, for example, would be familiar with aspects of Japanese poetry like haiku and its aesthetics, and would have heard of Li Po and Tu Fu but would not have even the faintest idea of any aspects of Tamil poetry.

The work of Professor Maraimalai Ilakkuvanar in this translation and in his untiring effort at presenting contemporary Tamil through his translations at various websites attempts to bring to the world's attention one invaluable part of our shared world

cultural inheritance: *Tamil poetry, as it lives through contemporary poets*. Professor Maraimalai, in his Preface to this collection, refers to translation as *creative treason.* While that may be an accepted aphorism on translations in general, this collection shows that translation, much to Professor Maraimalai's credit, is *creative exposure:* the translator presents here an excellent collection of contemporary Tamil poetry that the world community of poets and anyone interested in poetry may share and enjoy the universal joys and spontaneity of poetry.

A Cluster of Stars is a collection of poetry that is truly ambitions as its goes beyond the common concerns of many poetry websites that merely deal with themes of love and self-concern and about poets winging about the world. The collection deals with the poet's society and the world that we all share; the poetry deals with the specifics of the poets of the Tamil world and yet reaches out to include the concerns we all have was citizens of the world.

The poets in this collection, to begin with, reflect a great awareness of the nature of poetry and of the role of the poet in society and in the world.

The poet Kalaimadhiyan declares:

My soul is a fire and
The offering is my poetry.

And the poet *Thamizhazhagan* has these highly inspired lines about the nature of poetry:

The flame of word Lights up my tongue as a wick and performs

Yet, poetry is not simply an ideal and something insubstantial: poetry is about our lives and our world and about dynamic change as *Pon.Selvaganapathy declares:*

I am not a person
To camouflage myself
in grand old words.
I have come to
Agitate and shake up
The entire world
by New words.

And this call for a poetry of dynamic awareness and 'agitation' beyond concerns of one's own narrow self and more positively into the welfare of one's society and our world is heeded actively by the contemporary Tamil poets represented in this collection.

Va.Mu.Sethuraman in his poem *Victory of Obama will bring a change in the world!,* for example, is inspired by the American people's election of Barrack Obama and reminds America and the President-elect:

Great changes you have to make
Big challenges you have to face!
Equality, liberty and fraternity
Should remove all kinds of enmity!
Let there emerge a golden era!
No more recession! No more war!
Oppression and state terrorism drive the
Suffering community to struggle and fight!
Support the people who are suppressed!
No more calamities! Peace everywhere!

Pon. Selvaganapathy in his *Rituals of Peace* and K.C.S.Arunachalam in his *A Cuckoo, unable to sing* and Maniventhan in his poem *Let us create a New World* proclaim this poetry of a dynamic awareness of humanity's common destiny:

A world where there is no violence
A world which sings victoriously of peace,
A world where there is no perpetration on the poor,
A world where there is no vanity and false pride,
A world where the mind is as clear as a silvery moon,
A world where everybody lives a calm and content life
A world where there is no poverty and distress,

We can create and make the mankind be happy forever.(Let us create a New World by Maniventhan)

Yet the poets do not lose awareness of the local issues and Kadavoor Manimaran sounds the *Death-bell to caste* and Kavimukil in his poem *When shall we attain freedom?* challenges the conscience of the society he lives in:

Is there any freedom for us
from the rotten caste feeling?
.....
Is there any freedom for us
From the grips of our Masters?
.....
Is there only freedom for those
Who exploit and enrich themselves?

There is also a natural awareness amongst the poets here of the forms of poetry and this is reflected admirably in the way ntemporary Tamil poets use Japanese forms of poetry like

the haiku and the Senryu. The three sections of Haiku , Senryu and Limeraiku point to the versatility of these poets:

In that forest
Which bamboo
Is going to be a flute?
(Haiku - Amuthabharati)
Again and again-
The moonlight fell on it-
The rock blossomed into a flower!
(Haiku – Thamizhanban)

This collection invites anyone interested in expanding their enjoyment of our world poetry to include the exciting and unique world of contemporary Tamil poetry. I hope as many poets and poetry-lovers in the English-speaking world will find their way to this collection. The collection indeed is a marvelous offering of living poetry, much to the credit of the poets and to the dedication and care which Professor Maraimalai has put into his translation:

Summer

The flowers in the Mango trees
Metamorphose into bunches of fruits;
The Cuckoo that gives sweet music
Sings a duet with its pair;Oh! The lakes are dried-up now
The fishes agile jump and die!
This is the season of summer
When Sand only remains in river!

- *Vezhov*

✧ ✧ ✧

ABOUT THE BOOK

Dr. Maraimalai has Tamil Poetry flowing through his veins and beating out the rhythm of his heart. His selections reflect the depth and subtlety of a poetic sensibility that has developed from a lifetime devotion to Tamil.

Dr. Layne Little
Regional Director of the Lost & Endangered Religions Project : South Asia.

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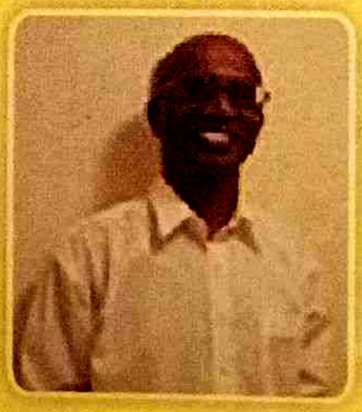

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